



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 28 May 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
28 MAY 1968

1. France

The old-line French organizations--and these include the Communist Party and the trade unions as well as the Gaullist government--yesterday were rebuffed again by the workers. Despite strenuous efforts by the Communist labor leaders in particular, the rank and file rejected the concessions granted over the weekend. In some cases the union officials were hooted off the platform when they tried to present their case.

The Communist union is now demanding even more concessions.

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Yesterday the Citroen Company, which has always been hardnosed in its labor relations, said it was asking the courts to order the strikers out of its plants. The workers are likely to react by digging in deeper.

Yesterday's student demonstrations avoided violence, but a US Embassy officer reports a pervasive feeling in the Paris Latin Quarter that there will be more trouble.

De Gaulle, who knows his old magic is not working, is said to be full of bitterness over these challenges at home when his influence abroad is so high. We understand he is wondering if he should have called for a referendum.

Ambassador Shriver reports that most of the French public has been highly critical of the government, and particularly of De Gaulle. Only Pompidou has emerged with his standing enhanced. Shriver notes a surprising tolerance for the current disruption. He finds, in fact, that the youth and even a good many of the middle-aged are exhilarated by the fresh winds blowing through France.

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2. France

In probing the heady and chaotic world on the other side of the Paris barricades,

countless numbers of "action committees" among the rebellious students. Most of these small groups have given themselves ideological labels, such as anarchist, Maoist, Trotskyite, Communist or rightist. In many cases, more than one group claims a given label. The two major Maoist groups, for instance, are in conflict as much with each other as with any of the other groups. One group intriguingly calls itself the "Freud - Che Guevara Action Committee."

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Until very recently there was no organized effort that we know of to coordinate the activities of these groups. According to the latest reports, a shadowy "central committee" of some kind has appeared at the Sorbonne. We know nothing so far of its membership or the extent of its authority. The students meet requests for such information with great hostility.

Our embassy is now getting reports that the students have established contact with some of the younger workers. The students are angry with the established unions for stealing their thunder, but they apparently think they can count on some support from contemporaries in the labor movement.

3. Vietnam

Fighting in South Vietnam slackened off somewhat after the sharp clashes of the weekend. A new battle broke out near Saigon, however, and the Communists are geared up for more heavy combat in both the western highlands and the northern provinces.

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4. Panama

Vallarino yesterday prevented the newly appointed head of the electoral board, a Samudio man, from taking office. This apparently leaves the way clear for the board to declare Arias' victory.

Since Samudio has no chance as long as the National Guard supports Arias, his supporters may now try to split the Guard. Important elements in the Guard have long been bitterly opposed to Arias, but we do not know whether they would dare to move against Vallarino.

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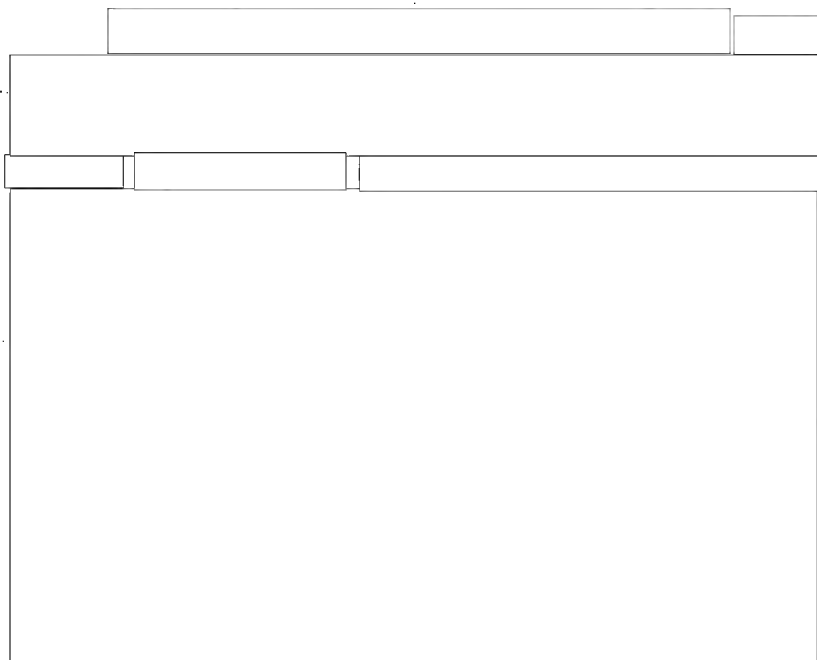
5. Iraq

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**6. Cuba -
Soviet Union**

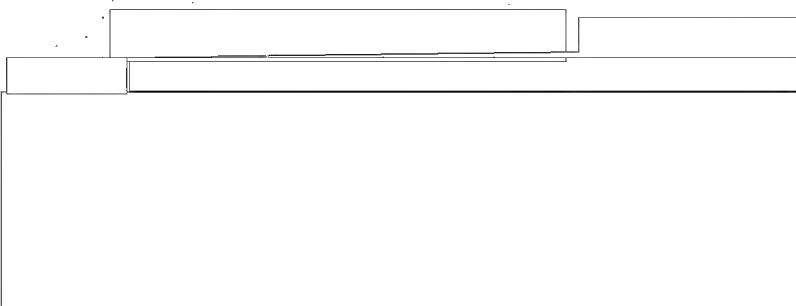


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7. Soviet Union



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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S
Political Attitudes

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**Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only**

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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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More Trainees to Poland: Two hundred more Vietnamese have arrived in Gdansk for training in the ship-building industry, according to the 13 May Polish press. The report also indicated that yet another group would arrive soon to take part in the training program, which is to last three to four years.

As of late last summer, there were some 2,000 North Vietnamese in Poland, about 75 percent of them in industrial training programs and the rest in higher education. Earlier this year, at least one group of some 300 arrived for training in various Polish enterprises. The total Vietnamese student and trainee complement in Poland probably is around 2,500.

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Propaganda on National Assembly: The North Vietnamese continue to pat themselves on the back over the recent session of the National Assembly. Hanoi press and radio output in Vietnamese and English is rehashing the Assembly's theme: "All for victory over the US aggressors."

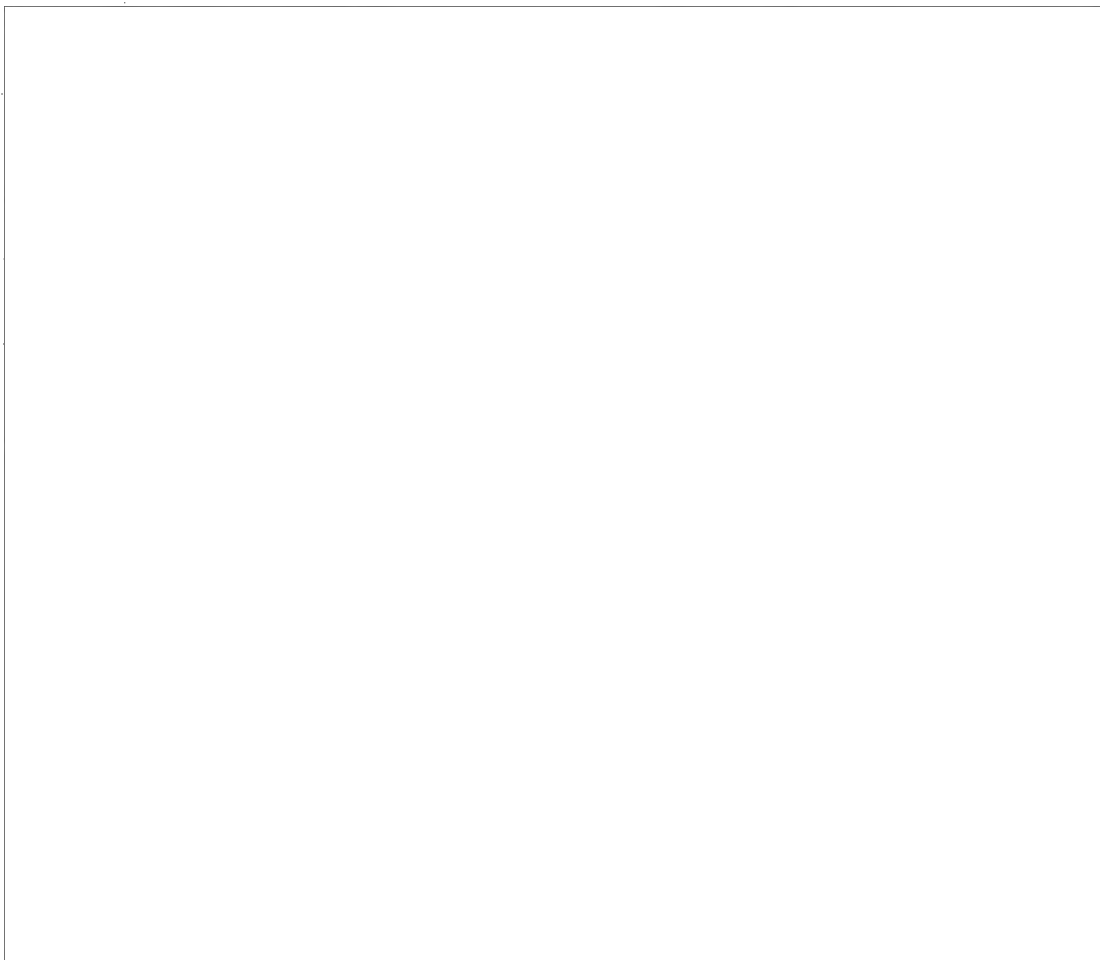
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Infiltrators Not Welcome: Some of the peasants in Thanh Hoa Province, North Vietnam, refused to give water for cooking rice to soldiers on the way South, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Troops going South through the southern provinces of North Vietnam reportedly were billeted in private homes and were unpopular because of their thievery and misconduct.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

There is nothing significant to report.

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